

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 88
Hearing: Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 3
Programme: Australian Antarctic Division
Topic: STAFFING
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 10 June 2014
Question Type: Written

Senator Whish-Wilson asked:

1. What staff cuts are planned in the Australian Antarctic Division over the next year?
2. How many rounds of voluntary redundancies have there been over the past 5 years?
3. Is there a voluntary redundancy round currently under way in the division?
4. What communication has there been with staff on this issue?

Answer:

1. Australian Antarctic Division (AAD) staffing levels are subject to fluctuations between and during years, depending on the extent, timing and location of scientific and operational activity in Antarctica. These fluctuations are driven by the numbers of temporary staff employed each year. Some permanent staff have left the Division through the Department of the Environment's voluntary redundancy rounds, and more are expected to leave in the next few months. These departures will have a negligible impact on overall staffing levels when compared to the fluctuations in temporary staffing. Hence, the Average Staffing Level for the AAD in the 2014-15 financial year shown in the Portfolio Budget Statement for the Environment Portfolio is 403, the same as for the 2013-14 financial year.

2. & 3.

The Department of the Environment has undertaken two rounds of voluntary redundancies in the past five years, all of which have included AAD staff. There is a third currently under way.

4. Departmental staff have been fully informed at all steps of these processes, including through regular emails, intranet pages and regular information sessions.